

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 MCT-01 PRS-01 EB-07 INR-07 L-03

NSC-05 CIAE-00 DOTE-00 FBIE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1712

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRIDGETOWN 2160

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, BB, CU

SUBJ: JUDICIAL INQUIRY, CUBANA CRASH

REF: A) STATE 271288; B) BRIDGETOWN 2141; C) HEAVNER-SIMMS
TELECON OF NOVEMBER 5

1. AS DCM SIMMS INDICATED TO HEAVNER, I WAS UNABLE TO
SECURE APPOINTMENT WITH MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
HENRY FORDE, WHO HAS BEEN EXTREMELY BUSY, AND THEREFORE
SENT HIM A LETTER SOLICITING THE VIEWS OF THE GOB ON
THE FUTURE CONDUCT OF THE INQUIRY.

2. TEXT THIS LETTER FOLLOWS:

"DEAR MR. MINSTER:

"AS INDICATED BY THE PROPOSAL FOR AN EXCHANGE OF
VIEWS ON THE CUBANA DC-8 CRASH, CONTAINED IN THE SECRETARY
OF STATE'S RECENT LETTER TO YOU, WE ARE DETERMINED TO
DO ALL IN OUR POWER TO PREVENT TERRORISM AND BRING
TERRORISTS TO JUSTICE. WE ARE ANXIOUS TO COOPERATE
WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF BARBADOS AS APPROPRIATE TO ACHIEVE
THIS END.

"IN REGARD TO THE CURRENT JURIDICAL ENQUIRY INTO THE
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CUBANA CRASH, WE WERE PLEASED TO ACCEPT THE INVITATION

EXTENDED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF BARBADOS TO PARTICIPATE, AND WE WANT TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE.

"WE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE INQUIRY WAS 'TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS . . . IN RESPECT TO AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT PREVENTION AND SAFETY MEASURES; AND TO FURNISH THE GOVERNOR GENERAL WITH A WRITTEN REPORT OF THE SAID INQUIRY AND RECOMMENDATIONS.' THUS, WE UNDERSTOOD THE INQUIRY WAS TO BE TECHNICAL IN NATURE.

"WE WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING THE VIEWS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF BARBADOS ON HOW THE INQUIRY WILL BE CONDUCTED IN THE FUTURE. WE NEED TO KNOW WHAT THE NEXT MEETING IS LIKELY TO ENTAIL SO THAT WE CAN DETERMINE WHAT OUR REPRESENTATION SHOULD BE. WE HAD EXPECTED A TECHNICAL INQUIRY, ONLY TO BE CONFRONTED BY SLANDEROUS CUBAN ACCUSATIONS, AND WE WANT TO BE PREPARED IF SUCH ALLEGATIONS ARE LIKELY TO BE REPEATED AT THE NEXT MEETING.

"WE WANT TO CONTINUE TO COLLABORATE CLOSELY WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF BARBADOS IN THIS AND OTHER MATTERS AND ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE MAINTENANCE OF THE EXISTING GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS. WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT THE SPIRIT AND ATMOSPHERE ESTABLISHED IN THE RECENT WASHINGTON MEETINGS WITH YOURSELF AND OTHERS WILL BE CONTINUED AND WE WILL DO EVERYTHING IN OUR POWER TO SEE THAT SUCH IS THE CASE.

"IN CLOSING, I SHOULD LIKE TO STRESS THAT NOTHING IN THIS LETTER SHOULD BE CONSTRUED AS AN INDICATION THAT WE ARE IN ANY WAY DISPLEASED WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF BARBADOS BECAUSE OF THE UNFORTUNATE TURN THE FIRST SESSION OF THE INQUIRY TOOK. WE DO NOT, OF COURSE, HOLD THE GOVERNMENT OF BARBADOS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BEHAVIOR OF THE CUBAN REPRESENTATIVES AT THE INQUIRY.

"WITH BEST PERSONAL REGARDS. SINCERELY, THEODORE R. BRITTON, JR., AMERICAN AMBASSADOR."

3. FORDE'S REPLY HAS NOT YET BEEN RECEIVED; WHEN IT IS, CONFIDENTIAL

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IT WILL BE FORWARDED TELEGRAPHICALLY. WE KNOW, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAS READ OUR LETTER AND IS AWARE OF OUR CONCERNS. BRITTON

NOTE BY OCT: DISTRIBUTION PER MR. MACK S/S-O.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BOMBING, AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, INVESTIGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BRIDGE02160
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760414-0014
From: BRIDGETOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761178/aaaacpui.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 271288, 76 BRIDGETOWN 2141
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 JUL 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <08 NOV 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JUDICIAL INQUIRY, CUBANA CRASH
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, EAIR, BB, CU, US, CUBANA AIRLINES
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006